

NORTHWEST WOMEN FLYFISHERS



NEWSLETTER

March 2009

March Meeting Program

“Everything You Wanted to Know About Fly Fishing but Were Afraid to Ask”

Presented by: *An In-house Panel of Experts*
Bonnie Steele, Moderator

Date: Tuesday, March 17, 2009
Time: 7:00-8:30 PM
Place: R.E.I (2nd Floor Meeting Ro
222 Yale Ave., Seattle, WA

By popular demand, we are assembling a panel of experts from NWF to answer any and all burning questions you might have about the sport we love. The panel will represent the best minds in the Club with respect to such topics as: (1) casting and fly presentation, (2) entomology, (3) fishing equipment, (4) fishing locations, and (5) reading the water. These topics represent a starting point only and questions about other topics relevant to fly fishing are welcome.

Please submit your questions in advance, if possible, by email to me- bonniestee@msn.com) or bring to the meeting on a 3x5 card. **Prizes will be given to the most helpful, most bizarre, most embarrassing, and most thought-provoking questions!** A summary of the questions and answers will be made available to members, either on-line or in the April newsletter.

There will be a board meeting at 5:45, prior to the membership meeting. All members are invited and encouraged to attend the board meeting. As usual, you can grab dinner at World Wrapps located adjacent to the meeting room in REI. Bring a fly (bought or homemade) for the fly raffle. Each person who contributes a fly gets their name placed in a hat, and one name will be drawn to win all of the flies. There will also be the usual meeting raffle, as well as NWF merchandise for sale.

We hope to see you there!

Dues Due!

You don't have to read this if you've already paid, but if you haven't, hark. This is it—your last Newsletter. You will be cut off at the mailbox if you have not paid your dues by March 31st. **If this issue has a blindingly bright sticker on the outside page saying that this is your last Newsletter, then it is just that.**

In April, we will be mailing this year's membership roster to all paid-up members. If you are not a member, you won't get this mailing. Plus, we will have to drop you from the FishingBuddies email group, and any club outings that you have signed-up to go on. You won't be notified of our great monthly meetings, and you will miss all the super articles and other information we provide you via the Newsletter. Don't let it happen. Be with us.

If you just haven't gotten around to it yet, **now** is the time.

Write your check and **fill in the renewal form on the back page**. Mail it to us. Like Uncle Sam, WE WANT YOU! As of March 3rd, 72 of 142 members have renewed)

(Editor's Note: this is a reprint of a 2003 article by Rosemary Weise; we thought it was worthy of reprinting.)

NWF Calendar

- Mar. 17 Regular Club Meeting @ R.E.I - 7:00
- Mar. 8 Fly Fishing Film Tour @ The King Cat Theater, (2130 6th Ave., Seattle.)
<http://www.flyfishingfilmtour.com/Schedule/>)
- Mar. 12 Fly Tying Circle, 6-9:00 p.m. at Jeannette's home. RSVP with Jeannette - 206-546-3000
- Mar. 26-28 Spey Days N.W. (FREE!) -- at Howard Miller Steelhead Park on the Skagit River.
www.SpeyDaysNW.com)
- Mar. 28 Beaver Lake Gear-Up & Casting Clinic
- Apr. 4 *or* 11 Lake Lenice Outing
- Apr. 18 Cady Lake Outing



Meanderings

By Dail Bodziony, NWF 2009 President

It is a beautiful February morning, just a very few short weeks away from the first day of spring, and my thoughts have turned to the first club Outing of the Year, Gear Up and the Casting Clinic at Beaver Lake. I decided this day would be perfect to have my own Gear Up. After much digging around in the shed, out came the waders and the boots and the water hose for the old leak test. Out came the vest, the rods, the reels and all the paraphernalia I seem to have collected over the winter that I knew at the time, would be just that one piece of equipment that would make all the difference in catching the perfect trout. It was a great afternoon of exploring and trying to figure out why in the world I bought this or that, each little thing seemed at the time, the perfect accessory. This afternoon turned out to be one of the best in a long time. For me, just the smell and feel of the waders and boots, and the very action of pulling it all together, brings a special sense of anticipation that only a fly fisher can fully understand.

What excited me the most about my own private Gear Up was finally opening "the box" that has been waiting for me for just the right moment. You see, this Christmas I had committed what my husband considers the mortal sin of the holidays – I had purchased "myself" a gift. A red Buck's Bag Southfork Pontoon Boat that has been calling my name from the shed for weeks. Now, to most of you, opening of The Box wouldn't seem like such a great event. To me, it meant the end of weeks of physical therapy to mend the arm I broke two weeks after Christmas (yes, it was my casting arm). It meant that I have been released by my doctor to go and catch the Big One. So, after much head scratching, and cursing the publisher of the instructions (it looked so simple in the store), as I put on my boots and waders, and sat in my new treasure for the first time in the grass of my backyard, for me the timing of the first Club Outing of 2009 couldn't be more perfect. It signals the start of a new fishing season and the renewal of the dream that yes, there is a fish out there with my name on it, and the hope that somehow all this physical therapy really has left me with the perfect cast. ♦



**Moving ? ... Didn't get your newsletter?
Changing your phone number or email?**
Be sure to notify Stacy Stratton at
satratton1964@comcast.net or (206) 937-4071

Membership Corner

By Stacy Stratton, Membership Chair



Cary Petty is one of our new members during February. She is new to fly fishing but tried it once with an uncle and enjoyed it enough to invest in a starter kit and join the club. She learned about NWF through research on the internet by her partner. Cary loves to hike and camp and fishing is a logical extension.

Welcome, and we look forward to fishing with you! ♦

Newsletter Volunteers

By Kim Lyons, NWF Newsletter Editor



Jamie Hatten has graciously volunteered to take Dail Bodziony's old job as the NWF newsletter stapler and mailer. Dail has been doing this task for the club for the past two years. Now, as club President, she has plenty of other time-consuming club-related tasks to attend to. The newsletter team is very happy to have Jamie offer to take over this job, which includes: picking up the printed newsletters from Kinkos, picking up the stamps at the post office, inserting any additional inserts - like ballots, outing schedules or other flyers, applying the mailing labels and postage stamps, folding, stapling, and then delivering these 70-80 newsletters to the post office each month. Many thanks go out to Dail for her two years of doing this, and also to Stacy Stratton who steps in when an alternate has been needed.

I would also like to add my additional special thanks to Stacy for her invaluable assistance with each and every newsletter. From writing and organizing articles, printing out the mailing labels, proof-reading each issue before it is sent out to members, and sometimes just calming me down on those occasions when the whole process doesn't work out as smoothly as I'd like it to; I honestly don't know how I could do this job without her assistance.

While I'm thanking folks, I'd also like to thank a number of other members who regularly contribute articles for the newsletter. You know who they are because you see their articles month after month -- including Dianne, Denise, Judy, Stacy, and Cynthia -- among many others. Also, I usually don't include a "by" line on the monthly meeting announcement on the front page, but that information is prepared by the Vice President. So, many thanks to Julie Monahan for doing that task over the past two years -- and to Bonnie who is now responsible for it. (I think that the biggest fear of each new President and Vice President -- and biggest relief of each "retiring" President and Vice President-- revolves around writing the monthly newsletter articles!) Thanks, also, to the many others who contribute to the newsletter, but that I didn't have room here to name. It's ALL appreciated! (Reminder: All members are encouraged to send in articles, trip reports, photos, quotes, poems, recipes, or anything else. ♦



At the February club meeting, new President, Dail Bodziony (Left) presents outgoing President, Cynthia Hickey, with an engraved fly box thanking Cynthia for her service leading the club in 2007-08.

February Board Meeting Recap

Submitted by Anne Crow, NWF Secretary

The new 2009 NWF board met for the first time prior to the February membership meeting at REI on Feb. 17th. Those present at the meeting included: Dail Bodziony, Bonnie Steele, Denise Pritzl, Cynthia Hickey, and Anne Crow. After reviewing the minutes of the previous board meeting, the following issues were discussed:

Conservation: Denise wants to look at the budget to determine what organizations to fund this year. Since treasurer Pat Bolton was not there with the budget, Denise recommended we table the discussion and come back to it later. The Board reviewed our policy of supporting wild fisheries.

Education/Mentoring: We seem to be all set with scheduled mentoring outings.

Upcoming March Meeting: Bonnie presented a list of ideas for speakers at upcoming club meetings.

Miscellaneous: There was a discussion regarding the decreased attendance that was noted at the Meydenbauer Fly Fishing show this year.

-- A number of local fly shops will be hosting a Flyfishing Fair on June 20th. Kristin Torda, owner of "All About The Fly", has asked NWF if the club would like to participate in some way.

-- Trails Fest is coming up in June. Cynthia had arranged a successful NWF sponsored fly fishing booth at that event last year.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m. ♦

2 Openings Available for Montana Fly Fishing Trip in July

By Ann Nash

Date: July 12-16th (Sunday – Thursday)

This is checking in on Sunday and fishing Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. Out on Thursday.

Cost: \$1,050; double occupancy. Deposit is \$100; non-refundable.

Organized by: Ann Nash, member of NWF and the Fidalgo Fly Fishers

Questions?: Call Ann, (360) 766-6450 or email her at annbow_2002@yahoo.com

Package includes:

- 4 Nights Lodging with two nights of Lodge dinners and breakfast all days
- Guided fishing for 3 days, all inclusive with bugs, leaders, guides and lunches. The guides will be arranged through the Stone Fly Inn and Fly Shop.
- Lodging is at the Stone Fly Inn, in downtown Twin Bridges, in cabins with two to a room. (www.thestoneflyinn.com)

This trip is limited to 10 people, 2 per cabin. A slight adjustment in the price will be negotiated for fishers wishing to bring their own RV's or tents. There are 5 hook-up spots, I believe. There are currently eight women confirmed for this trip at this point, with room for two more.

Twin Bridges, MT is Located 30 miles south of I-90 between Whitehall and Dillon. Possible rivers include: The Beaverhead, the Ruby, Big Hole, Jefferson and the Madison.

Some of us are flying to Missoula and some are driving, I believe, so there seem to be possibilities for car pools. Driving time between Missoula and Twin Bridges is about 2.5 hours. Twin Bridges to Bozeman- about 1.5 hours.

The cancellation policy is: "If a person cancels within a 45 day window, and I am not able to fill their spot with another person, they are accountable for the balance of their reservation. We do understand emergencies do arise and will take certain things into consideration." ♦

-QUOTES-

"If I'm not going to catch anything, then I'd rather not catch anything on flies" - Bob Lawless -

"I look into... my fly box, and think about all the elements I should consider in choosing the perfect fly: water temperature, what stage of development the bugs are in, what the fish are eating right now. Then I remember what a guide told me: 'Ninety percent of what a trout eats is brown and fuzzy and about five-eighths of an inch long.'" - Allison Moir -

Outings

Outings Scoop: March 2009

By Dianne D'Alessandro, Outings Chair (206)914-4386

This year we have an excellent selection of club outings, a few member sponsored outings, and spontaneous outings that will be announced on Fishing Buddies based on weather and fishing conditions. If you have questions, please call me or the Outings Mom for the outing. If you have not received a copy of the NWF 2009 Outings Calendar, call or email me and I will email you a copy.



On outings, club members (and often their family and friends) gather to enjoy fishing and socializing. Outings are opportunities to meet club members and share fishing experiences. Our NWF banner is posted to make it easier to find us. It is always a good idea to introduce yourself to folks if you are new or do not recognize someone.

If an outing requires a fee in advance, please bring your checkbook to club meetings to sign-up. Plan on writing separate checks for each outing and depositing each in the envelope attached to the signup sheet. I know this may be inconvenient but it is the simplest way of tracking funds without a bookkeeping system. If you prefer, or cannot sign-up at the club meetings, you may sign up for an outing by calling me. If a deposit is required, I must receive it in the mail within five working days to hold your position. NWF dues must be current to participate in outings.

Upcoming Outings

March 28th, 10 AM - 3 PM -- Beaver Lake Gear-Up and Casting Clinic

This is the 2009 Club Sponsored kick-off education outing for beginners which has been very popular in the past.

The club just offers two opportunities for casting instruction, this outing and the Fly Fishing Boot Camp that will be offered June 6-7. See your Outings Calendar for details.

Beaver Lake Gear-up and Casting Clinic is an all-day event at Beaver Lake, near Sammamish, with a Gear-up program in the morning, a break for lunch, and casting clinic in the afternoon. This is an opportunity, if you are beginner flyfisher-women, curious about what equipment to buy, or need help with your casting to get started for this season of fishing, this outing is tailored for you. There will be extra rods for casting if you have not invested in a rod yet. See your Outings Calendar for all of the details and directions. If you are new to this sport and anxious to get your feet wet (a pun) join us for a relaxed, informal day, and learn from experienced club members.

Plan on being outside all day. Dress appropriately and bring your lunch and a chair to sit on if you like comfort. There is a large fireplace in the Pavilion. If everyone brings a little firewood we will have a warm place to

gather rain or shine. This outing does require signup in advance.

April 4th or April 11th -- Lake Lenice

Located 15 Miles East of Vantage, WA. (Approx. 3+ hour drive from Seattle).

This is a member sponsored outing. Lois has volunteered to be the outings Mom and will offer some mentoring opportunity if you call her in advance to set that up. See your outings calendar for details. The date for this outing will likely be April 4th but may slide to April 11th if the weather is bad, especially if high wind is predicted. This lake is famous for windy days. Stay tuned to fishing buddies for date confirmation.

This is one of Washington's premier lakes with big rainbows, browns, and tiger trout. Sink-tip or full sink line helps. The lake can be windy and cold-- be prepared. A float tube or pontoon boat is a must. There is very limited bank access. Plan to haul gear about ¼ mile to the lake from the parking lot.

No sign-up in advance is required. There is no fee. If you are a level 2 fisher or have never been to this lake call Lois well in advance to set up a meeting time and place.

After a day of fishing, camp at Wanapum State Park (located 3 miles south of Vantage back across the Columbia River Bridge on the West side.) or return home. Some people will opt to stay in the parking lot at Lake Lenice. There is a vault outhouse and not much else. (No Water or tables) Bring your own lunch and drinks, sun and wind protection, and water. Did I mention that this can be a very windy place? Wanapum in particular can be very windy because it is on the Columbia River. Bring an anchor or at least a bag for rocks on a rope to anchor your tube.

Lois will watch the weather and fishing reports and confirm the date on FishingBuddies.

April 18 - Cady Lake

This club sponsored outing is a mentoring fishing outing for inexperienced members. Mentoring of new or inexperienced members, teamed with an experienced fisherman, will be provided in the morning on Saturday. We will have a buddy sign-up for inexperienced folks or new members so that they can be matched with an experienced fisherman. Your buddy will spend the morning with you on the lake from 10 AM to 1 PM. Arrive at 9:30 AM to set up. Several members have extra float tubes. Call Ann Bastin, the outings Mom, if you need one or place a request on Fishing Buddies. Long, heavy underwear is needed under waders as well as flippers to use a float tube.

This can be a day outing or overnight. There are a couple of options for accommodations:

- make reservations to stay at the beautiful Cady Lake Manor B&B on the lake. See their web page at www.cadylake.com or
- camp at Belfair State Park on Route 300 a couple of miles west of Belfair and about 10 miles from

the lake. (see comments). Reservations are on a first come basis this time of year. See the web page www.camis/WA/ for details on this lovely state park.

See the NWF 2009 Outings Calendar for details.

Sign up in advance for an opportunity to fish with a mentor. A \$10 fee is required. Fees will be contributed to the NWF conservation fund.

Directions: Cady Lake is located on the Tahuya Peninsula in Western Washington, 28 miles southwest of Bremerton, and 13 miles west of Belfair.

Directions to the Lake from the town of Belfair: Upon entering Belfair from the north, make a RIGHT TURN at the traffic light onto N. E. Clifton Ln. and go past the Safeway store. Go straight through the 4 way stop, and continue past the QFC store. You are now on SR 300, also known as the North Shore Rd. Follow this road for about 4 miles. Two blocks after passing the entrance to Belfair State Park, TURN RIGHT onto the Belfair - Tahuya Rd. Go up the hill and continue for about 7.45 miles. RIGHT TURN onto the Dewatto Rd. Go 1.6 miles and make a LEFT TURN onto the dirt road just beyond black-top driveway with the brick gateposts that mark the entrance to Cady Lake Manor to access the public fishing area.

Note: If you have a new float tube or pontoon boat, be sure you inflate it prior to the outing day so that you do not have to waste time figuring out how to inflate and put together your equipment. Bring warm cloths, gloves, rain gear, and your lunch. There are no facilities or stores after you leave Belfair. Cady Lake is catch and release only. **Please consider making a donation at the donation box in the parking lot for the management and stocking of the lake to continue this wonderful resource.** ♦

Overlake Fly Fishing Club Auction



You are invited to attend the Overlake Fly Fishing Club silent and live dinner auction "Fishing and So Much More" this **March 28th** in the Olympic Room at the Issaquah Holiday Inn, 1801 12th Ave NW in Issaquah, WA. The auction features a large selection of rods, new and classic reels, equipment, great guided trips, books as well as many non-fishing related gifts like theater tickets, jewelry and gift baskets. The first silent auction starts at 04:00 pm, and a sit-down dinner starts at 06:30 pm. Tickets for the dinner (not available at the auction), directions and all the details about this fun event can be found on our website at: www.offc.org. You can attend the auction only if you prefer, but please be sure to register so we can best accommodate you. Don't delay! *Reservations need to be made before March 18th*. Everyone is invited!

Best regards and tight lines!

Tim Allen, Auction Chairman, OFFC
425-256-0325

Stop the Destruction of the Bristol Bay Fishery

Submitted by: Denise Pritzl, Conservation Chair

At last month's Northwest Women's Flyfisher's meeting, we viewed the movie Red Gold. (Watch snippets of this film on www.savebristolbay.org) NWF members requested additional information be posted in the NWF newsletter to inform all members about the looming degradation of fishing habitat in Bristol Bay. Below is information related to Bristol Bay, its fishery and the Pebble Mine that threatens its destruction. Think about what you might do as an individual to save Bristol Bay.

Alaska's Pebble Mine: Fish Versus Gold

by Bill Sherwonit

(from: Yale Environment 360 -- September 8, 2008)

For thousands of years, Alaska's Bristol Bay region has been home to one of the Earth's most remarkable wildlife spectacles: Each summer, tens of millions of bright, silvery salmon return from ocean waters and pour into the bay, before separating into runs bound for several major river systems.

While salmon throughout much of North America have been wiped out or become endangered, Bristol Bay's fecund waters continue to produce the planet's richest wild salmon fishery. Nurtured by clean, nutrient-rich lands and waters, legions of fish are harvested – 32 million salmon in the bay last year alone – by commercial, subsistence, and sport fishers alike, producing annual revenues of more than \$110 million.

In recent years, however, another potential source of immense wealth has emerged around Bristol Bay. At the headwaters of two drainages that flow into the bay, beneath lands owned by the state of Alaska, a company named Northern Dynasty Minerals has discovered a gargantuan mineral deposit. The granitic rocks hidden beneath an otherwise ordinary upland basin and rounded foothills contain riches beyond anything ever discovered in North America – and possibly the world.

The find is known as Pebble Mine, and, with its full extent yet to be determined, officials estimate that it contains 67 billion pounds of extractable copper, 82 million ounces of gold, and 4 billion pounds of molybdenum. At current prices, the mine's metals are worth \$345 billion to \$500 billion. That makes the Pebble Mine the second-largest deposit of its kind ever found, only slightly behind Indonesia's Grasberg Mine. Some suspect Pebble will become No. 1 once its full extent has been learned.

Now, with the defeat last month of an Alaska ballot measure that would have prohibited new mines from discharging pollutants that would harm humans or salmon, Northern Dynasty and its partners are continuing with efforts to assess the size of these deposits. They have been greatly

Continued on next page ...

Conservation *(continued)*

helped by Gov. Sarah Palin — the Republican candidate for vice president — who, despite a constitutional ban on state officials becoming involved in ballot initiatives, publicly expressed her “personal” opposition to the measure. Many say the popular governor’s stance was decisive. Before her comments, polls suggested that citizens supported the referendum. Afterward — and following the use of her picture in advertisements opposing the tough mining initiative — the measure was voted down on Aug. 26, with 57 percent against and 43 percent in favor.



Despite the setback of the ballot measure, which mining interests fought with an advertising and lobbying campaign costing nearly \$8 million, large numbers of Alaskans are still raising questions: Can a vast industrial project — which might include a two-mile-wide open pit mine and a dam, hundreds of feet high and up to four miles long, to hold tailings and acid wastes — be constructed in a wild, seismically active zone without leading to an environmental catastrophe? And, ultimately, will the mining of this vast mineral wealth irreparably harm the natural wealth that defines Bristol Bay — its salmon?

Never has a large-scale industrial proposal ignited such widespread opposition in Alaska, which traditionally has enthusiastically welcomed development and mining ventures. But with such huge potential profits at stake, Northern Dynasty and its partners clearly are not going to back down, especially now that the ballot proposition, known as Measure 4, has been laid to rest.

In a pro-development state where the economy is largely sustained by resource extraction, you might have expected residents to embrace such a golden prospect. Initially they did, particularly in Bristol Bay, where the economic mainstay of commercial fishing crashed in the late 1990s and early 2000s because of below-average returns of wild salmon and the global boom in raising farmed Atlantic salmon. Locals figured a new world-class mine could be an economic windfall.

But as Bristol Bay residents began to learn more about Pebble and open-pit mining, attitudes shifted. Many became staunch opponents, fearing both the loss of traditional lifestyles and the potential for poisoned waters and fish.

The mine lies in an area of sweeping lowlands, gently rounded hills, and wetlands crossed by zigzagging creeks and dotted with innumerable, unnamed ponds and lakes. In summer, the mixed tundra-forest countryside is a deep, vibrant green, the waters darkly blue. This landscape, and the proposed Pebble project, are located at the core of Bristol Bay’s salmon and trout fisheries — the headwaters of the Kaktuli River and Upper Talarik Creek, small clearwater streams that feed two major river drainages, the Nushagak and Kvichak Rivers. “That’s the heart of our subsistence,” says Molly Chythlook, a Yup’ik Eskimo raised in the small village of Aleknagik and now a resident of the Dillingham, the region’s commercial hub. “I don’t know what could be worse than to have a mine in that place.”

Though five species of salmon are born and die in the Bristol Bay drainage, sockeye, in particular, pour into local rivers and creeks in fantastic numbers, turning streams crimson as they push their bodies — transformed from saltwater silver to bright red — toward ancestral spawning grounds. In 2008, the sockeye run alone is estimated at 40 million fish. Such abundance is helping the wild salmon fishery to rebound as consumers grow wary of farmed salmon.

“Salmon are the No. 1 source of life here,” explains Bobby Andrew, a Yup’ik elder and lifelong Bristol Bay resident. “They’re the most important source of food. But they also have great cultural and spiritual value to my people.”

In addition to salmon, Bristol Bay’s river-and-lake systems teem with trophy-class rainbow trout. These attract anglers from around the world and support a flourishing industry of sport-fishing guides, backcountry lodges, outfitters, and air charter operators.

After preliminary discoveries in the area by another company, Northern Dynasty acquired the mineral rights in 2001. Between 2002 and 2005, exploratory drilling revealed the presence of a huge porphyry sulfide deposit, now known as West Pebble. The three principal metals — copper, gold, and molybdenum — are disseminated as tiny grains through the more than 4.5 billion tons of rock, and the cheapest, most efficient way to extract them is by open-pit mining.

The initial Pebble Mine find touched off Alaska’s greatest gold-rush frenzy since statehood, and by 2005 companies had staked thousands of claims across hundreds of square miles. Then, in 2007, the company announced the discovery of a second, much richer, section of the ore body, known as East Pebble, which could be mined underground.

Pebble’s riches have lured two of the world’s hard-rock mining giants, both based in London: Rio Tinto and Anglo American. Together with Northern Dynasty, they have formed the joint venture now called the Pebble Partnership.

Critics are troubled by many things, not least of which is the size and nature of Pebble’s footprint. Besides the possibility of open-pit and underground operations, the mine would include a mill, an immense tailings pond, and a huge dam, built to hold several billion tons of waste. In all, Pebble would consume some 15 square miles of tundra, marshes, creeks, and lakes. Beyond the mine, a 100-mile road and pipeline would likely be constructed to get the ore to a port on Cook Inlet.

Northern Dynasty promises to develop the prospect without threatening Bristol Bay’s fisheries, but opponents remain skeptical. Because Pebble is in a seismically active area, many fear the dam could collapse in an earthquake, allowing toxins to spill downstream. But even if no catastrophes occur, they argue, a mine could contaminate groundwater that feeds Bristol Bay’s streams.

Above all, opponents argue that Alaskans shouldn’t gamble the health of Bristol Bay’s world-class fisheries for the sake of a mining operation that will benefit few locals or the state. Because of the tax system for hard-rock mining, state and

Conservation (continued)

local governments would receive limited revenues, with nearly all profits going to companies outside of Alaska.

Sean Magee, the Pebble Partnership's director of public affairs, agrees that "there are plenty of examples of bad mining practices, especially in the American West." But most occurred decades ago, when environmental standards weren't as high, he says. "There are plenty of great examples of hard-rock mining that have safely co-existed with fisheries," he says, "including three in Alaska." He cites Northwest Alaska's Red Dog Mine, the Interior region's Fort Knox gold mine, and Southeast Alaska's Greens Creek Mine – all excavated in the 1980s and 1990s – as operations that "actually improved water quality and fish populations downstream."

Lauren Oakes, conservation programs officer with Trout Unlimited Alaska, replies that all three of those mines have "have had their problems." Red Dog alone, she says, has had more than 100 EPA violations and been sued for contaminating local food resources. "I just don't see the models of success that Mr. Magee is referencing," says Oakes. "I see demonstrated pollution problems in Alaska and the Lower 48."

While the toxic legacy of hard-rock mining troubles opponents, so does government's failure to adequately police and prevent pollution.

Federal and state permitting processes have too often failed to protect the environment, argues Brian Kraft, a Bristol Bay lodge owner and Southwest Alaska project director with Trout Unlimited. He points to a 2006 study showing that regulators have consistently proved unable to predict – and therefore prevent – the pollution of surface water and groundwater by hard-rock mines.

"The problem," says Kraft, "is that the state's permitting system is vague and not very stringent. The existing statutes give the DNR [Alaska Department of Natural Resources] commissioner very wide latitude in deciding what's permissible."

The list of the mine's opponents is long. It includes nearly a dozen Bristol Bay village or tribal councils, Alaska-based fishing groups, a seafood-processing association, the Alaska Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Association, the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corp., and a locally based land trust. Even U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens, long a supporter of development interests in the state, has said he is "very disturbed" by the project.

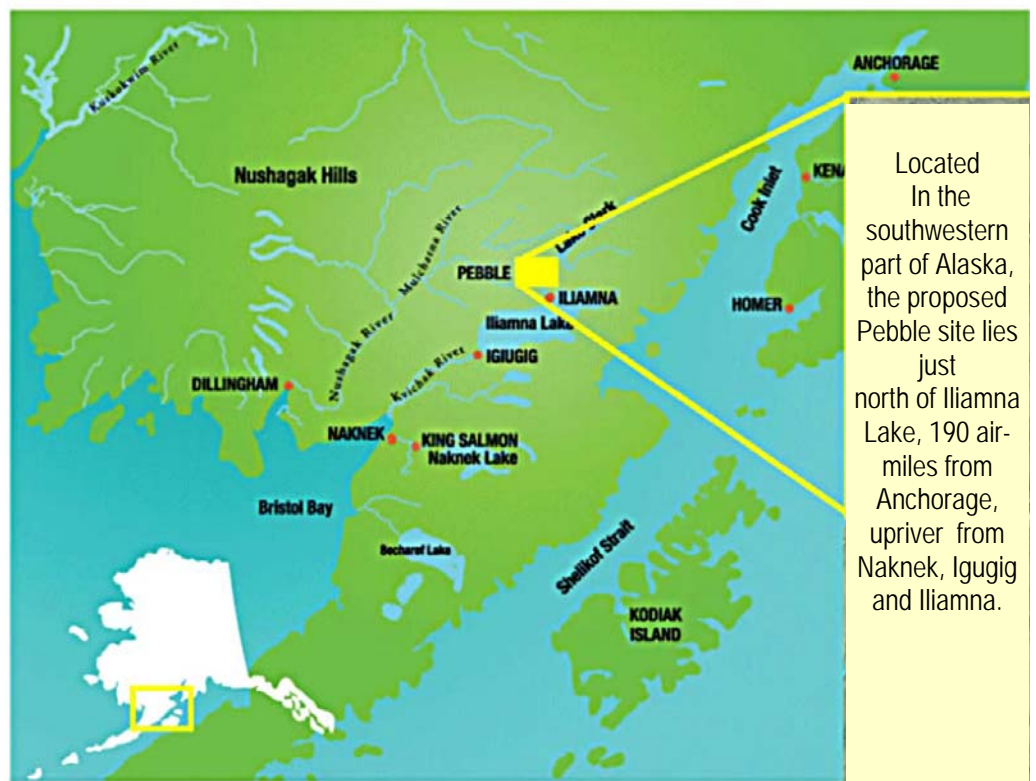
Pebble's advocates include several of the state's politically influential

resource-development groups, as well as the Lake and Peninsula Borough (which encompasses much of the Bristol Bay region) and some Native corporations. Unlike many village and tribal groups, Alaska's Native corporations are largely pro-development and are supporting Pebble Mine because they view it as an economic windfall.

Pebble Mine opponents hoped to cripple the project with Measure 4, which would have strictly limited the pollutants that metal mines could discharge into streams and drinking water. But the mining interests' massive advertising campaign successfully painted Measure 4 as an extreme initiative that threatened the state's mining industry and its 5,500 jobs. In addition to speaking out against the measure and allowing her image to be used in mining industry advertisements, Gov. Palin also allowed her Department of Natural Resources to promote a "no" vote on its Web site. The Alaska Public Offices Commission later ordered the department to take down its statement of support. Palin's critics said her involvement in the ballot measure was a misuse of her power and violated the spirit of the constitutional ban prohibiting state officials from getting involved in citizen initiatives.

Northern Dynasty is expected to unveil its mining plan next year. Measure 4 proponents have vowed to continue their effort to block the Pebble project, which still needs various state regulatory approvals.

The battle may soon be waged in the courts. Ultimately, for Alaskans, the issue will boil down to this: Do the benefits of tapping into one of the planet's richest mineral lodes outweigh the risks to one of the world's last, great fisheries? ♦



Located in the southwestern part of Alaska, the proposed Pebble site lies just north of Iliamna Lake, 190 air-miles from Anchorage, upriver from Naknek, Igrugig and Iliamna.

Club Contacts

2009 Board of Directors:

President: **Dail Bodziony** (206-281-1217)
mbpagoda@comcast.net

Vice Pres: **Bonnie Steele** (206-524-7458)
bonnieste@msn.com

Secretary: **Anne Crow** (206-325-1547)
Crow.anne@dorsey.com

Treasurer: **Pat Bolton** (425-391-4703)
boltonfish@gmail.com

Trustee: **Cynthia Hickey** (206-722-9691)
cynthia.hickey@hotmail.com

Conservation Chair: **Denise Pritzl** (206-914-4386)
dpritzl@u.washington.edu

Committees:

Fundraising/Raffles/Merch- **Meryl Schenker**
(206-935-2466) meryl.schenker@comcast.net

Outings - **Dianne D'Alessandro** (206-914-4386)
diandales@hotmail.com

Membership/Roster – **Stacy Stratton**
(206-937-4071) sastratton1964@comcast.net

WA & ID Casting for Recovery—**Joanne Elston**
(206-948-4352) joanfisch@aol.com

www.NorthwestWomenFlyfishers.com
Email: NWFflyfishers@hotmail.com

Newsletter Submissions:

The NWF Newsletter is published by and for the members of NWF. Articles, letters, photos or artwork related to the sport of fly fishing or club activities are welcome. The **deadline** for submissions to the Newsletter is the first Tuesday of each month.

Please send submissions for the NWF Newsletter to:

Kim Lyons

11104 NE 160th Place, Bothell, WA 98011

Phone: 425-489-9784, Fax: 425-483-7959

Email: rivertrance@verizon.net

2009 Membership Application & Renewal Form

Name: _____ Renewal New Member

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____ HomePh: (____) _____

Cell Ph: (____) _____ (*Renewing Members: Have you changed your address / phone #'s / email in the past year? __Y __N*)

\$30 I would like to get my Newsletter via email (Adobe Acrobat .pdf File)

\$35 I would like to get my Newsletter on paper (via the U.S. Postal Service)

Conservation Donation (optional): I have enclosed a \$_____ donation for the "NWF Conservation Grant Fund".

New & Renewing Members: If you are not a member of the NWF_FishingBuddies email group, would you like to be? ____ Yes ____ No

Mail application and check to - NWF, P.O. Box 31020, Seattle, WA 98103-1020 (Make checks payable to NWF)

NORTHWEST WOMEN FLYFISHERS
P. O. BOX 31020
SEATTLE, WA 98103-1020